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WABH HALLIMAN Q

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of human, knowledge of your own mind, and the way to the heart of the human mind. It is a book that is not only a book of the heart, but also a book of the mind. It is a book that is not only a book of the heart, but also a book of the mind. It is a book that is not only a book of the heart, but also a book of the mind.

NIQAAB

A SEAL ON THE DEBATE

KAMILLAH KHAN



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"All Praise be to Allah ﷻ, The Lord of all the worlds. May He send Peace and Blessings upon Muhammad ﷺ his family and companions."

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INTRODUCTION

The truth regarding the *Niqaab* issue will never be found if we continue to simply quote the opinions of the scholars for they have differed and the truth is one, with the truth found in the narrations. Instead we need to address this issue through the proofs found in the collective narrations and not simply cut and paste one text here and one text there. In fact we have to take from where the scholars took until we review their evidences and compare them with the evidences found in the collective texts in the various books of *Hādīth*. Thus did Allah ﷻ instruct us to refer back to Him and His Messenger ﷺ in all matters of dispute. The scholars of Islam upheld this noble command, calling mankind back to the Speech of Allah ﷻ and the guidance of Muḥammad ﷺ. This is what the scholars advocated. They never advocated blind following of their statements, nor were they always correct in each and every ruling, nor were their words completely free from untruths. Consensus amongst the scholars is one thing and their differing another; with their differing requiring a more vigorous review of the narrations.

Yet Instead of referring back to the Qur'an and Sunnah

on the issue of the *Muslimah's* dress code, our time has been flooded with the cutting and pasting of opinions without recourse to the collective narrations. If we review the various articles, writings and postings on the issue of *Hijaab* and *Niqaab* we will find that many English texts have been badly translated and the evidences themselves poorly presented, with the end point being promoting a view instead of propagating the *Hāq*.

Let us leave the opinions for a moment and return to the evidences found within the Qur'an and Sunnah for this is the knowledge that we seek. Before looking at the evidences we begin by addressing some of the serious problems found in the English translations of the texts pertaining to the dress code of the *Muslimah*. These problems most surely require our consideration with a view to seek correction and restoration of what exactly was said.

A. IDENTIFYING THE AMBIGUOUS ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF VERSES IN THE QUR'AN

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and protect their private parts, and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils (*Khumur*) all over their *Juyub*.

(Qur'an Al-Nūr: 31)¹

O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) (*Jalaabeeb*) all over their bodies. That will be better, that they should be known so as not to be annoyed. And Allah is Ever Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

(Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 59)²

When we look at the translations of the words *Khumur* and *Jalaabeeb* we find that they have been translated as veils and cloaks respectively in Muhsin Khan's translation of the Qur'an. However, we also find that the word 'veils' appears in brackets when translating the word *Jalaabeeb* which causes confusion to some readers who fail to distinguish the veiling of the *Khumur* from the veiling of the *Jalaabeeb*.

And when you ask (his wives) for anything you want, ask them from behind a screen (*Hijaab*). That is purer for your hearts and for their hearts.

(Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 53)³

O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) (*Jalaabeeb*) all over their bodies (*ie.*, screen themselves completely except the eye or one eye to see the way).

(Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 59)⁴

When we look at the verse of the *Hijaab* we find the word *Hijaab* has been translated as screen. However Muhsin Khan also describes the *Jilbaab* as a screen, which he mentions in brackets. So how is the screening of the *Hijaab* distinct from the screening of the *Jilbaab*?

It would have been better to highlight the words *Khumur*, *Jalaabeeb* and *Hijaab*, and retain them in the English translations of the texts. Thereafter these words could have been explained in footnotes or explanatory notes. By neglecting this methodology, the above translated texts are clearly a means of confusion.

The Arabic *Hādīth*, explain and clarify the meaning of the Arabic Qur'an, so we would have hoped that the English translations of the *Hādīth* would have clarified the English translation of the Qur'an along with these words *Khumur*, *Jalaabeeb* and *Hijaab*. However when reviewing the translated *Hādīth* concerning the female Islamic dress code, we find the confusion only increases with many texts being clearly ambiguous and misleading.

B. IDENTIFYING THE AMBIGUOUS ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF THE HADITH

‘Ā’ishah said that the lady came, wearing a green veil (*Khimaar*).

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁵

Hafṣah bint Sīrīn said, “We used to forbid our girls to go out on the day of *Eid*. A woman came and stayed at the palace of Banū Khalaf and I went to her. She said, ‘The husband of my sister took part in twelve battles along with the Prophet and my sister was with her husband in six of them. My sister said they used to nurse the sick and treat the wounded. Once she was asked, ‘O Messenger of Allah! If a woman has no veil (*Jilbaab*) is there any harm if she doesn’t come out?’ The Prophet said, ‘Her companion should let her share her veil (*Jilbaab*) with her.’

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁶

Narrated ‘Umar, I said, ‘O Messenger of Allah good and bad persons enter upon you, so I suggest that you order the mothers of the believers to observe veil (*Hijaab*)’

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷

In the above *Hādīth* the words *Khimaar*, *Jilbaab*, and *Hijaab* have all been translated as veil. *Jilbaab* is singular for *Jalaabeeb* and *Khimaar* is singular for *Khumur*. So when the English readers study these texts they will not be able to distinguish between the covering of the *Khimaar*, *Jilbaab* and *Hijaab* because all these words have been translated to mean veil.

Abdullah bin 'Umar narrated that he heard the Messenger of Allah say, 'The Women in *Ihrām* should neither put on gloves nor the veil (*Niqaab*)'

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud)⁸

Other texts describe the *Niqaab*, such as the above *Hādīth* which describes how a *Muhrimah* cannot wear the *Niqaab*. But again, the English translation of the word *Niqaab* is veil. So now we have four words—all describing the veil.

'Ā'ishah narrated, 'The believing women used to attend *Fajr* prayer with the Messenger of Allah, covered with their veiling sheets (*Muroot*).'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁹

Other texts include the word *Muroot* which is translated as veils in the form of veiling sheets. So now we have five words, all translated as veil.

Aṭā' said, 'I and Ubaid bin Umair used to visit 'Ā'ishah while she was residing at Jauf Thabīr.' Ibn Juraij asked, 'What was her *Hijaab*?' Aṭā' replied, 'She was wearing an old Turkish veil (*Qubbah*

Turkeyyyah). And there was nothing between us and her except that.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)¹⁰

In the above *Hādīth* the *Hijaab* of 'Ā'ishah has been described as a *Qubbah Turkeyyyah*, which has been translated as an old Turkish veil. So now we have a sixth word '*Qubbah*' which has also been translated as veil.

So when we look at the numerous English texts pertaining to the dress of the *Muslimah*, what do we have except the fact that the word veil has prevailed, leaving us with the real question—what is the veil? Is the veil the *Khimaar* or the *Jilbaab* or perhaps the *Hijaab*? Is the *Muroot* the veil and how are these veils different to the veil known as the *Niqaab*? And what exactly was the *Qubbah Turkeyyyah* that 'Ā'ishah was in? It is clear that we cannot answer these questions so long as the word veil appears in these texts in this ambiguous non informative way.

Ṣafīyyah bint Shaybah said that 'Ā'ishah mentioned the women of Anṣār praised them and said good words about them. She then said, 'When Surat Al Nūr was revealed, they took the curtains, tore them and made head covers (veils) (*Khumur*) of them.'

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud)¹¹

Some translators have tried to bring out the actual meaning of the individual Arabic words, but then after doing so they have again included the word veil in brackets which is counter-productive. The above *Hādīth* is a good example where the word *Khumur* has been accurately translated as head covers only to be rendered ambiguous by including the word veil in brackets.

So what is the solution except that these individual words need to be gathered and their individual meanings need to be clearly explained to the people. Once we understand the meaning of these names and know their attributes, we can proceed by investigating whether they describe different types of clothing or different attributes of the same piece of clothing. No sincere researcher can deny the fact that such a methodology is vital, even more so when there is increasing confusion regarding the topic of the veil today.

C. IDENTIFYING THE MISLEADING ADDITIONS FROM TRANSLATED TEXTS OF HADITH

Descriptions, accounts and opinions external to the 'word for word' translation of the Arabic *Hādīth* should be provided in footnotes or explanatory notes. This is most befitting yet widely neglected in many translations where

foreign words have been mixed with the words of the original text.

Although the general principle is that Arabic texts are taken on face value, at times there is a genuine need for the addition of extra words due to the grammatical rule of *Idhmār* and other rules like it. *Idhmār* describes how words which are needed grammatically to complete the sentence structure have not been expressed by the one uttering the words. Thus, these words will not be found in the original texts.

Hanzalah narrated that the Prophet said, 'O Hanzalah! A time and a time,'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)¹²

In this *Hādīth* our Prophet ﷺ meant, 'a time for this and a time for that.' However the words 'for this' and 'for that' do not appear in the original text due to the grammatical rule of *Idhmār*. So the addition of these extra words is praiseworthy for they are needed to convey meaning by completing the sentence structure.

In contrast other translated *Hādīth* have had additional words incorporated into their texts—not based on a grammatical need. In fact these additional words have their origin from an opinion which the translator wished to propagate.

Narrated Ṣafīyyah bint Shaiba: ‘Ā’ishah used to say: “When the verse: ‘and to draw their veils (*Khumur*) all over their bosoms’ was revealed, (the ladies) cut their waist sheets from their margins and covered their heads and faces with those cut pieces of cloth.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)¹³

In this erroneous translation the words ‘*Ikhtamarna Bihā*’ have been translated as ‘covered their heads and faces with those cut pieces of cloth,’ instead of simply saying ‘covered with them’ which is the correct translation. The word faces does not appear in the original Arabic text nor is it grammatically implied or assumed. A more correct translation would be:

Narrated Ṣafīyyah bint Shaiba: ‘Ā’ishah used to say: “When the verse: ‘and to draw their veils (*Khumur*) all over their bosoms’ was revealed, (the ladies) cut their waist sheets from their margins and covered with them.”

This is a significant alteration which cannot be overlooked for this *Ḥādīth* in no way describes how they covered. Rather, all we learn from this particular *Ḥādīth* is the fact that they covered. Yet the translator has made it

seem that ‘Ā’ishah mentioned how the faces were covered which is a clear lie against her.

Some people defend this action saying scholars such as Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalānī have stated that it meant that they covered their faces. Even if some scholars believe this, this is not the place to put these words—in the text of *Ḥādīth*. Firstly, this addition alters the true translation of the Arabic words. Secondly, words taken from an opinion which lacks consensus have been carved in stone and incorporated along with the true translated text. Thirdly, the reader will erroneously believe that ‘Ā’ishah said these words, which is a clear lie against her. So the text has been adulterated, then this corrupted text has been presented very casually to the English reader as a fact, when in fact it includes words taken from an opinion. This is the case if the opinion was correct, then what would we say if the opinion was wrong?

Irrespective of opinions we should leave the texts as ‘texts’ and anything else should appear in the form of footnotes so that the reader knows the additional words are not part of the original text. These errors are unfortunate, especially since the *Ḥādīth* texts in general have been correctly conveyed in the English Language. These errors are also dangerous lest the translators ascribe to the mothers of the believers that which they never said.

D. IDENTIFYING WORDS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC TEXT

Other translated English texts pertaining to the *Muslimah's* dress code have been corrupted to the point that original Arabic words have been removed from the English translation in order to promote an opinion.

'Ā'ishah said, 'Sawdah went out to answer the call of nature after it was made obligatory (for all the Muslim ladies) to observe the veil (*Hijaab*).'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)¹⁴

Although the word *Hijaab* is used today for the head cover this is not how Allah ﷻ used the word. The proper name for the head cover is *Khimaar*. In the Qur'an Allah ﷻ used the word *Hijaab* in reference to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, with the word *Hijaab* referring to a complete screen. Such screening would include the screening behind a physical barrier such as a curtain within the home, and a complete screening under a covering from head to toe when leaving the home. This *Hijaab* was obligatory only for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ.

However in the above text, the translators tried their best to promote the opinion that the obligation to observe this *Hijaab* was obligatory upon all the believing women. In

order to promote this opinion an Arabic word was purposely left untranslated and instead foreign words were presented in brackets. The above text should read:

'Ā'ishah said, 'Sawdah went out to answer the call of nature after the *Hijaab* was made obligatory *Alaynā*' (upon us)

The word *Alaynā*, which means upon us, is crucial for it refers to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. 'Ā'ishah was referring to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ in general and to herself and Sawdah specifically because she was narrating the story of Sawdah. So she used the word *Alaynā* to restrict the obligation of the Screen to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. Yet the translator omitted the translation of this word and instead placed foreign words in brackets which contradict and oppose this word. In doing so, the meaning was dramatically changed from indicating the wives of the Prophet ﷺ to indicating all believing women.

E. IDENTIFYING THE OPINIONS CONTAINED IN BRACKETS WITHIN TRANSLATED TEXTS.

Good translations make little use of brackets, using them sparsely, when for example they are required

grammatically. The use of brackets also interrupts the flow of wording which would otherwise come out beautifully even in the English language. However, more importantly brackets should not be used to propagate opinions. Such opinions should appear as footnotes. If translators insist on using brackets to discuss opinions related to the text, then they have to provide a reference. This would be just.

O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) all over their bodies (screen themselves completely except the eyes or one eye to see the way).

(Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 59)¹⁵

For example, in Muhsin Khan's translation of the Qur'an, he has included words in brackets. In the above translated text the words in brackets have been left unattended, with many readers not knowing their origin. These words were included because the translator believed he could support them by a narration attributed to Ibn Abbās. Firstly he hasn't informed us of that. Secondly, despite the fact that many *Ḥādīth* scholars have declared this particular narration inauthentic, he has not discussed that in footnotes. Thirdly he has not clarified to the readers that these words in brackets lack consensus and in fact represent an opinion of only some scholars. He may have included these words in

brackets based on the understanding of a few scholars, such as Ubaydah As-Salmānī. Ubaydah was a scholar from amongst the *Tābi'ūn* (second generation) and his position regarding the covering of the face clearly lacks evidence from *Ḥādīth*. Furthermore many scholars from amongst the same generation opposed his view so his opinion cannot be counted as evidence. In any case this is not the place to put the opinions of the scholars—into the translation of Allah's Speech. Such words are better left for *Tafsīr*, so that the words may be correctly identified and open to review and challenge.

So glorify Allah, when you come up to the evening and when you enter the morning. And His are all the praises and thanks in the heavens and the earth; and (glorify him) in the afternoon and when you come up to the time when the day begins to decline. (Ibn Abbās said: 'These are the five compulsory congregational prayers mentioned in the Qur'an') (*Tafsīr* Al Tabari)

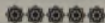
(Qur'an Al-Rūm: 17-18)¹⁶

Surprisingly he has referenced Ibn Abbās in other translated verses, so why did he conceal it in one and reveal it in another? Verse Al-Aḥzāb: 59 had more right to be referenced because there is no consensus in what was said,

as opposed to verse Al-Rūm: 17-18 in which the meaning is clear.

How can the English readers possibly review the evidences when such problems are widespread throughout the English texts pertaining to the dress code of the *Muslimah*! In an attempt to seek correction let us remove these errors by highlighting key Arabic words and bringing texts which contain the same Arabic words together. Let us remove the erroneous additions within the translated text and separate the opinions from the facts for a moment, so that we can see what is actually being said using numerous texts from *Hādīth*. *Inshaa Allah* this book serves to discuss the dress code of the *Muslimah* using this very methodology and I ask Allah ﷻ to open the minds and hearts of the readers as we discuss this topic with a view to raising His Word.

In this book the words *Khimaar*, *Jilbaab*, *Hijaab*, and *Niqaab* have been discussed and described in detail using numerous translated texts while retaining key Arabic words. Although sisters may be aware of some of the texts, the information derived from the texts keeps mounting as more and more texts are studied, until the description of the obligatory *Muslimah*'s dress code becomes clear and distinct from that which was made obligatory for the mothers of the believers.



THE KHIMAAR

From the language the word *Khimaar* means covering with a more specific definition being a head covering. This linguistic meaning has been highlighted in the texts of the Sunnah.

Bilāl narrated that the Messenger of Allah passed (wet hands) on the leather socks and the *Khimaar*

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)¹⁷

In the above *Hādīth* the word *Khimaar* has been used to describe a male head covering, as opposed to numerous texts which use it to describe the female head covering. So the word *Khimaar* can be used for both male and female head covers in keeping with its linguistic meaning of a head covering—and not a head and face covering.

THE VERSE OF KHIMAAR

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and protect their private parts, and not expose their

adornment except that which is apparent, and to draw their *Khumur* over their *Juyub*.

(Qur'an Al-Nūr: 31)¹⁸

In the above verse Allah ﷻ commanded the believing women to wear the *Khumur* by drawing their *Khumur* over their *Juyub*. In order to understand the meaning of this verse the description of both the *Khumur* and the *Juyub* needs to be explained through the texts of *Hādīth*.

﴿﴾

THE HADITH OF KHIMAAR

‘Ā’ishah said, “May Allah bestow mercy on the emigrant women. When Allah revealed, ‘and draw their *Khumur* over their *Juyub*,’ they tore their *Muroot* and covered with them.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)¹⁹

‘Ā’ishah said, “When ‘And draw their *Khumur* over their *Juyub*’ was revealed, (the ladies) cut their *Izaar* from their margins and covered with them”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)²⁰

Ṣafīyyah bint Shaybah, said that ‘Ā’ishah mentioned the women of Ansār, praised them and said good

words about them. She then said, ‘When Surat Al-Nūr was revealed, they took the curtains, tore them and made *Khumur*.’

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwūd)²¹

If any *Hādīth* deserve to be called the *Hādīth* of *Khimaar*, then the *Hādīth* of ‘Ā’ishah are the ones, for they describe what happened immediately after Allah ﷻ revealed the verse of *Khimaar*. The believing women from both the Muhājirūn and Ansār covered themselves by making head coverings using available cloth such as the *Muroot*, *Izaar* and curtains. The *Muroot* were the woollen unstitched sheets which were available in their homes.

﴿﴾

THE KHIMAAR COVERS THE JAYB

However, unlike the case with men, Allah ﷻ instructed the women to draw their head coverings over their *Juyub*, with *Juyub* being plural for *Jayb*, and the word *Jayb* meaning pocket. So now we have two areas which need to be covered with the *Khimaar*—the head and the *Jayb*.

Ḥaḍṣah bint Abdur Rahmān visited ‘Ā’ishah, the wife of the Prophet, and Ḥaḍṣah was wearing a long thin

Khimaar. 'Ā'ishah tore it in two and made a wide *Khimaar* for her.

(Muwatta of Mālik)²²

The above *Hādīth* of 'Ā'ishah is widely neglected yet easily found in the Muwatta of Mālik. It is an important text which describes an attribute of the *Khimaar* in that it should be wide. The purpose of this is to allow the *Khimaar* to drape over the shoulders and cover the *Jayb*, which includes the neck and chest area. This is the pocket of area which Allah ﷻ has described as the *Jayb* in the verse of the *Khimaar*. Although Ḥafṣah bint Abdur Rahmān came wearing the *Khimaar* she had not drawn it over her *Jayb*, and thus 'Ā'ishah showed her how to properly cover by making the *Khimaar* wide, allowing it to fall over her shoulders and cover her neck and chest.

Anas bin Mālik reported, 'Umm Sulaim went out wrapping her *Khimaar*.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)²³

This description is further supported by other texts including the *Hādīth* of Umm Sulaim where she wrapped her *Khimaar* around herself. Thus she covered her head with the *Khimaar* and then wrapped the cloth over her chest and shoulders, concealing her *Jayb*.

Hence the sisters who wear head scarves which cover their head while exposing the neck and chest area have not worn the *Khimaar* properly and their covering is not valid. Instead they have to cover their head, neck and chest while leaving their faces exposed. And those who claim that the *Jayb* includes the face are mistaken. They have no evidence to support their claim from the texts of *Hādīth*. This further becomes clear when we look at two situations in which the *Khimaar* is worn—in front of non *mahram* people and for *Salāt*.

KHIMAAR AS A HEAD COVERING IN FRONT OF NON-MAHRAM

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and protect their private parts, and not expose their adornment except that which appears thereof, and to draw their *Khumur* over their *Juyub*. And not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husband's fathers, or their sons, or their husband's sons, or their brothers, or their brother's sons, or their sister's sons, or their women, or the slaves whom their right hands possess, or male servants having no physical desire, or children who are not yet aware of the private aspects of women.

(Qur'an Al-Nūr: 31)²⁴

'Ā'ishah said; that a lady came wearing a green *Khimaar*.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)²⁵

Anas bin Mālik reported, 'Umm Sulaim went out wrapping her *Khimaar*.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)²⁶

The *Khimaar* is the head covering which has to be worn in front of everyone except those whom Allah ﷻ has exempted. This is one situation with another one being *Salāt*. Although the situations are different the covering is the same.

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#### KHIMAAR AS A HEAD COVERING FOR SALĀT

Umm Salamah narrated that she asked the Prophet, 'Can a woman pray in a *Dir'a* (long dress) and *Khimaar* without an *Izaar* (lower garment)?' He replied, 'If the long dress is ample and covers the feet.'

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud)<sup>27</sup>

Mālik narrated from Nafi that he saw Ṣafiyyah bint

Abī Ubayd, the wife of Abdullah ibn 'Umar, take off her *Khimaar* and wipe her head with water. Nafi was a child at the time.

(Muwatta of Mālik)<sup>28</sup>

'Ā'ishah narrated that the Prophet said, 'The *Salāt* of a post pubertal woman is not accepted by Allah unless with a *Khimaar*.'

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud; Sunnah of Ṭirmidhi; Sunnah of Ibn Mājah; Musnād of Aḥmad)<sup>29</sup>

The *Khimaar* worn in front of non *mahram* men is the very same *Khimaar* worn for *Salāt*. Now we ask the question—does the *Khimaar* cover the face?

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THE KHIMAAR EXPOSES THE FACE

'Ā'ishah narrated that the Prophet said, 'The *Salāt* of a post pubertal woman is not accepted by Allah unless with a *Khimaar*.'

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud; Sunnah of Ṭirmidhi; Sunnah of Ibn Mājah; Musnād of Aḥmad)³⁰

The *Hādīth* of 'Ā'ishah is of particular importance

because in this text, we find that our Prophet ﷺ informed us that the *Salāt* of a post-pubertal woman is not accepted unless she wears a *Khimaar*. If the *Khimaar* covered the face, then that would mean covering the face is mandatory for *Salāt* because 'the *Salāt* of a post pubertal woman is not accepted by Allah ﷻ unless with a *Khimaar*.' So it is clear that the *Khimaar* covers the head, neck and chest while exposing the face, for there is no such condition that the face must be covered for the *Salāt* of a *Muslimah* to be accepted. There is no excuse for scholars who know the above *Hādīth*, to impose covering the face on the grounds that 'the *Khimaar* is a piece of clothing which covers the face.' If they believe as such, then let them voice the erroneous belief that the pray of a woman is not accepted unless she covers her face.

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and protect their private parts, and not expose their adornment except that which appears thereof, and to draw their *Khumur* over their *Juyub*, and not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, or their fathers...or children who are not yet aware of the *Awrah* of women.

(Qur'an Al-Nūr: 31)³¹

Some scholars have included the face in the *Awrah*

(private aspect) of the woman when this conclusion is not true. Allah ﷻ has linked the *Khimaar* with the *Awrah* of a woman with the word *Awrah* being plural for *Awrah*. The believing women do not have to wear their head covers in front of children who are not yet aware of the *Awrah* of women. In front of them they can remove their head covers and expose their hair and neck, while exposing their underlying dress which covers their chest and this is all part of their *Awrah*. So the *Khimaar* covers the *Awrah* and we have just mentioned how the *Khimaar* does not cover the face. Hence the face is not part of the *Awrah*.

There was a consensus amongst the earlier scholars that the *Awrah* of a woman needs to be covered for *Salāt*, so how is it possible to include the face as part of the *Awrah* when the face can be exposed during *Salāt*? Let those who believe that the face is part of the *Awrah* voice the erroneous belief that the *Awrah* can be exposed for *Salāt*.

Abdullah narrated that the Prophet said, '*Al-Mar'ah* (The woman) is *Awrah*'

(Sunnah of Tirmidhi)³²

In some writings this text has been erroneously translated as 'all of a woman is *Awrah*' instead of simply saying, 'The woman is *Awrah*,' which is the correct translation. The word 'all' cannot be derived from the Arabic

text. Some translators may argue that the word *Al* (the) denotes all. Firstly, this is not the proper translation and the Arabic word for 'all' does not appear in the text. Secondly our Prophet ﷺ would distinguish between the words '*Al* (the)' and '*Kulluhā* (all of it)' such as when he said, '*Kulluhā*' to highlight and stress upon the wholeness of an object.

Jābir narrated that the Prophet said, 'I have stood here, and Arafat *Kulluhā* (all of it) is a place for standing.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)³³

For example, in the above text our Prophet ﷺ did use the word 'all' when he said all of Arafat is a place of standing. The word *Kulluhā* is clear in the Arabic text and through it the wholeness of Arafat as a place for standing was stressed. There are numerous texts wherein our Prophet ﷺ used similar expressions to highlight the wholeness and completeness of something, yet he never stressed this for the woman's *Awrah*. So why did some translators deceive the people and lie about the words of the Prophet ﷺ?

Instead the statement 'The woman is *Awrah*' is a general statement in regards to the woman and needs to be understood along with the other texts which specify and restrict its meaning. The following example may help illustrate this point.

Abū Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said, 'The Earth has been made for me a thing to purify and a *Masjid*.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)³⁴

This *Hādīth* is general and the Prophet ﷺ was talking about the Earth in general. However there are other texts which restrict the meaning of this text, such as the texts which indicate prayer in graveyards or places for relieving oneself is not valid, yet these are places on the Earth. So the general meaning of this *Hādīth* has been restricted by other narrations. This principle is well known to the scholars of *Hādīth* who have used this principle in extracting *Fiqh* derived from the texts.

Abdullah narrated that the Prophet said, 'The woman is *Awrah*'

(Sunnah of Ṭirmidhi)³⁵

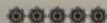
Similarly, this *Hādīth* is general but its meaning has been restricted by the narrations which prove that the face is not *Awrah*.

Umm Salamah narrated that she asked the Prophet, 'Can a woman pray in a *Dir'a* (long dress) and *Khimaar* without an *Izaar* (lower garment)?' He

replied, 'If the long dress is ample and covers the feet.'

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud)³⁶

The *Awrah* is fully covered when one wears the *Khimaar* and a long dress which covers the body including the feet. Such covering meets the criteria for *Salāt*, covering the *Awrah* while leaving the face exposed. We cannot simply do away with these texts to support an opinion derived from another text. Rather the texts have to be reconciled and understood together as one whole. And there are other narrations which support the fact that the *Khimaar* did not cover the face and the face is not part of the *Awrah*, but I have presented them in the next section which describes how the Muslim women left their homes wearing both their *Khumur* and *Jalaabeeb*.



THE JILBAAB

From the language the word *Jilbaab* describes a large outer garment. However unlike the *Khimaar*, linguistically it is confined to the outer garment of the female.

THE VERSE OF JILBAAB

O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their *Jalaabeeb* over their bodies. That will be better, that they should be known so as not to be annoyed. And Allah is Ever Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.

(Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 59)³⁷

In translations of the above verse the word *Jalaabeeb* is often translated as veils just like the word *Khumur*. It is not correct to simply translate both these coverings as veils for Allah ﷻ has distinguished between them, describing two distinct types of coverings.

THE HADITH OF JILBAAB

Narrated Umm Salamah, mother of the believers, "When the verse, 'That they should draw their *Jalaabeeb* over their bodies' was revealed, the women of Ansār came out as if they had crows over their heads.

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud)³⁸

The above *Hādīth* deserves to be called the *Hādīth* of the *Jilbaab*, because it describes what happened immediately after the verse of *Jilbaab* was revealed.

THE JILBAAB COVERS THE HEAD

The above *Hādīth* of Umm Salamah describes how the *Jilbaab* covered the head. This is how the women of the Ansār wore it. The expression 'crows over their heads' also highlights how, in this particular scene, the women came out wearing black *Jalaabeeb*. Although other styles and colours were used, the expression 'crows over their heads' describes these two aspects in reference to the women of Ansār. However the covering of the face cannot be inferred from the above text for Umm Salamah said, 'over their heads and not 'over their faces.' We should note that the woman wore her *Khimaar* and then placed the *Jilbaab* over her *Khimaar* and

body, so the *Khimaar* and the *Jilbaab* were worn together. This has been discussed later along with the different styles of covering.

THE JILBAAB IS A LARGE OUTER GARMENT WHICH COVERS THE BODY

The *Jilbaab* covers the body completely. However this expression has been used to promote the face covering when in fact this is far from the truth. What it means is the *Jilbaab* was placed over the head and then wrapped around the trunk and limbs in a manner one wraps oneself using a single large sheet of cloth. This becomes clear when we review the evidences.

Narrated Umm Atiyya, We were ordered to bring out our menstruating women and virgin girls in seclusion to the religious gatherings and supplication of the Muslims on the two *Eid* festivals. These menstruating women were to keep away from the *musalla*. A woman asked, 'O Messenger of Allah! What about one who does not have a *Jilbaab*?' He said, 'Let her share the *Jilbaab* of her companion.'"

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)³⁹

From the above *Hādīth* of Umm Atiyya, we know that Muslim women used to share their *Jalaabeeb* with each other, proving the fact that the *Jilbaab* was large and ample in size. This *Hādīth* also proves how the *Jilbaab* was a loose sheet which could be wrapped and shared between two women. This attribute is further supported by the fact that the believing women sometimes wore the *Muroot* as their *Jilbaab*.

‘Ā’ishah said, “May Allah bestow mercy on the emigrant women. When Allah revealed, ‘and draw their *Khumur* over their bosoms,’ they tore their woollen dresses (*Muroot*) and covered with them.”

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁴⁰

The *Murrot*, plural for *Mirt*, were the large loose sheets of woollen cloth, which were widely available in the homes of the believing women. From such cloth they would sometimes make head coverings.

Narrated ‘Ā’ishah, ‘Umm Mistah stumbled by getting her foot caught in her *Mirt*.’

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁴¹

However other times a woman would use the *Mirt* as her *Jilbaab*, covering her body easily with this loose sheet of

cloth.

‘Ā’ishah narrated, ‘The believing women used to attend *Fajr Salāt* with the Messenger of Allah, covered with their veiling sheets (*Muroot*).’

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁴²

The *Muroot* would also be used as *Jalaabeeb* during *Salāt* at the Masjid, and there are other texts which describe its general use.

So the *Jilbaab* was a loose outer garment which covered the head over the *Khimaar*, and then covered the body by being wrapped around the body in a manner one does using a single sheet of loose cloth.

THE JILBAAB EXPOSES THE FACE

Narrated Umm Salamah, mother of the believers, “When the verse, ‘That they should draw their *Jalabeeb* over their bodies’ was revealed, the women of Ansār came out as if they had crows over their heads.

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwūd)⁴³

Some argue that the use of the phrase, ‘crows over their

heads,' implies that their faces were covered. They expect others to believe this expression conclusively proves this. Firstly, the expression is not conclusive from a linguistic point of view. Secondly, the expression includes the words, 'over their heads, and not 'over their faces,' describing how their heads were covered as previously mentioned. Thirdly, other texts describe how this expression was used in general for any black covering over the head. The *Hādīth* of 'Ā'ishah recorded by Ibn Hātim makes use of this very expression for describing the *Khumur* of the Ansāri women.

'Ā'ishah said, 'The women of Quraish are good but by Allah I have not seen the goodness like the women of Ansār in their strong truthfulness to the Book of Allah and Imān in revelation. When Surah Al-Nūr was revealed, 'Let them draw their *Khumur* over their bosoms,' their men came to them and recited to them what had been revealed. There was not amongst them a single woman except that she went to her *Mirt*. And in the morning they were praying *Subh* prayer wrapped as though there were crows over their heads.

(Ibn Abī Hātim)⁴⁴

Here again we have the use of the same expression, 'crows over their heads,' but this time in context to the revelation of the verse of *Khimaar*. Umm Salamah used it in

reference to the *Jilbaab* and 'Ā'ishah used it in reference to the *Khimaar*. Hence, it is clear that this expression is a general expression for placing a black covering over the head whether by way of wearing the *Khimaar* or the *Jilbaab*. Nobody can say that this expression describes the covering of the face. This is a strange and bold assertion devoid of proof. Rather, those who say this expression does not concern the face have more right to speak, for the expression has been used to describe both the *Khimaar* and the *Jilbaab* and we have already described how the *Khimaar* exposed the face.

Narrated 'Ā'ishah, 'The believing women covered with their *Muroot* used to attend *Fajr Salāt* with Allah's Messenger and after finishing the *Salāt* they would return to their homes and nobody could recognise them from the Galas (darkness)

(Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁴⁵

This *Hādīth* is widely known and widely quoted to prove many points including the fact that *Fajr* Prayer was offered early during the Prophet ﷺ's time; some women used to attend prayer at the *Masjid*; and some women used to wrap the *Muroot* around themselves as their *Jilbaab*. However some scholars have also inferred that the *Jilbaab* covered the faces of the women and that is why they couldn't be recognised. This is incorrect, for the reason why

nobody could recognise the women was because of the Galas or darkness. Can we imagine the believing women attending *Fajr* prayer with a woollen sheet over their head covers and dresses and their faces exposed. Can we imagine them leaving after prayer and nobody being able to recognise them due to their covering amidst the surrounding darkness. Furthermore had the *Muroot* covered their faces along with their bodies then there wouldn't have been a need for 'Ā'ishah to state that nobody could recognise them, for this would have been obvious by virtue of the coverings description. Yet 'Ā'ishah specifically states that they couldn't be recognised from the darkness. Had the darkness disappeared, their faces would have appeared and they would then be recognised.

Abdullah bin 'Umar narrated that the Prophet said, 'The women in *Ihrām* should not wear a *Niqaab* nor should she wear gloves.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁴⁶

'Ā'ishah said, 'Pilgrims were passing by us while we were with the Prophet of Allah. When they came close to us we would draw our *Jilbaab* from the head to cover the face.'

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwūd)⁴⁷

The description of the *Jilbaab* further becomes clear when we study the above texts together. Our Prophet ﷺ forbade affixing a *Niqaab* during the state of *Ihrām*. So the mothers of believers, those who went into seclusion after the verse of screening was revealed, still had to perform Hajj with the people—what did they do? They left the *Niqaab* while wearing the *Jilbaab*. So there is something about the *Niqaab* which the *Jilbaab* does not have, and that is the fixed covering of the face

So does the *Jilbaab* cover the face? No, for the faces of the mothers of the believers were exposed while wearing the *Jilbaab* in *Ihrām*. In fact, in order for them to cover their faces in front of men, they had to manipulate the *Jilbaab* from its natural position, pulling the cloth from above their head downwards. Once the men passed by, they again exposed their face bringing their *Jilbaab* back into its original position. Hence, the *Jilbaab* had to be manipulated before their faces could be covered.

Narrated 'Abdullah bin Abbās, "Al-Fadl was riding behind Allah's Messenger, and a woman from the tribe of Khath'am came and Al-Fadl started looking at her and she started looking at him. The Prophet turned Fadl's face to the other side. The woman said, 'O Allah's Messenger! The obligation of Hajj enjoined by Allah on His devotees has become due on my

father and he is old and weak, and he cannot sit firm on the Mount; may I perform Hajj on his behalf?' The Prophet replied, 'Yes, you may.' That happened during the Hajj Al-Widā."

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁴⁸

The incident with Fadl and the Khath'am lady provides additional evidence that the *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab* did not cover the face. This is what we can truthfully infer and extract from the text. Yet bizarre interpretations have been invented including the fact that Fadl was looking at her breast and curves. This is a disgusting allegation against him devoid of any proof. Although he committed a sin by not lowering his gaze we cannot say he was attentively looking at her breasts unless there is proof. Rather he was looking at her face. Secondly even if we accept the fact that he looked at her body, would the *Khimaar* not hide her breast area and would the *Jilbaab* not hide her curves, for this is why they are worn in the first place!

Others concluded that her face was temporarily visible for a moment in time and that is when Fadl caught a glimpse of her. What would happen if we continued to extract *Fiqh* rulings using this kind of conjecture? We might as well make up anything we want and add to the story such as a thief came and stole her garment so she was left with her face exposed. However the actual text of the *Hādīth* prevents

us from saying any of this. We have to leave the original text as the original text and explain it in that context without adding to the real story. There is one way we could add to a story in the *Hādīth* and that is when other texts describe the same incident while offering additional pieces of information. Bringing such narrations together offers a more complete account of the story. This is why the past *Hādīth* scholars used to gather multiple texts related to the same story and present a concise account in their writings. The story of Fadl becomes more informative when we study a few more texts.

Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās, 'Al-Fadl bin Abbās rode behind the Prophet as his companion on the back portion of his she camel on the Day of Nahr and Al-Fadl was a handsome man. The Prophet stopped to give the people verdicts. In the meantime, a beautiful woman from the tribe of Khath'am came, asking the verdict of Allah's Messenger. Al-Fadl started looking at her as her beauty attracted him.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁴⁹

This incident between Fadl and the Khath'am lady took place on the 10th of Dhul Hijja on the day of Nahr. More specifically, it took place when the Prophet ﷺ stopped to give the people verdicts regarding the Hajj. This incident

when he gave verdicts is well known and famous and it occurred in Mina.

Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Amr, "Allah's Messenger stopped during his last Hajj and the people started asking him questions. A man said, 'Ignorantly I got my head shaved before slaughtering.' The Prophet replied, 'Slaughter (now) and there is no harm in it.' Another man said, 'Unknowingly I slaughtered the *Hadi* before doing the *Rami*.' The Prophet said, 'Do *Rami* now and there is no harm in it.' So, on that day, when the Prophet was asked about anything done before or after (its stated time) his reply was, 'Do it (now) and there is no harm.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁵⁰

This *Hādīth* describes the verdicts mentioned in the previous *Hādīth*. During this time, the Kha'tham lady also sought a verdict for her father. So we know that the Fadl incident took place after the rituals of stoning, slaughtering and shaving at Mina were completed for the people were seeking verdicts regarding them. Tracing this exact time is important because after the stoning all that was forbidden in *Ihrām* became permissible except sexual relations. So the ruling that women in *Ihrām* could not cover their faces with *Niqaab* was lifted. Some women did cover their faces like the mothers of the believers, seeking after the recommended

acts, and they would have now resumed their usual clothing. Had the Kha'tham lady been amongst them she would have appeared with her face covered at this time. Hence those who say that this incident occurred while she was prohibited from wearing *Niqaab* are mistaken.

In all summation, those who say the Kha'tham lady's face was covered have no evidence to support their claim—no substance from any point of reasoning or angle.

Jābir bin Abdullah reported, "I observed prayer with the Messenger of Allah on the '*Eid* day. He commenced with prayer before the sermon without *Adhan* and *Iqama*. He then stood up leaning on Bilāl, and he commanded (them) to be on guard (against evil for the sake of) Allah, and he exhorted (them) on obedience to Him, and he preached to the people and admonished them. He then walked on till he came to the women and preached to them and admonished them, and asked them to give alms, for most of them are the fuel for Hell. A woman having a dark spot on the cheek stood up and said, 'Why is it so, Messenger of Allah?' He said, 'For you grumble often and show ingratitude to your spouse.' And then they began to give alms out of their ornaments such as their earrings and rings which they threw on to the cloth of Bilāl."

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)⁵¹

However Allah ﷺ has sufficed us and the evidences are not confined to one text. We are not in need of the Fadl incident to prove the face of women used to be exposed while wearing the *Khimaar* and *jilbaab*, for the narrations which describe that time are found within numerous texts. In the above *Hādīth* Jābir described an *Eid* occasion which he witnessed with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He described how the Prophet ﷺ led them in *Eid* prayer and then proceeded with offering a *Khutbah* in front of the men. He then described how the Prophet ﷺ came to the place where the women were seated, where he again preached to them. During this time a woman who came to attend *Eid* prayer stood up and asked the Prophet ﷺ a question, which caught the attention of Jābir. In looking up to see who was asking the question, he caught a glimpse of her face and noted that she had a dark spot on her cheek. This is how he remembered her. Yet this woman was out in public attending *Eid* so she must have been covered with her *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab*—yet her face was exposed.

Narrated Sahl bin Sa'd, "A woman came to Allah's Messenger and said, 'O Allah's Messenger! I have come to give you myself in marriage.' Allah's Messenger looked at her. He looked at her carefully and fixed his glance on her and then lowered his head. When the lady saw that he did not say anything, she

sat down. A man from his companions got up and said, O Allah's Messenger! If you are not in need of her, then marry her to me...'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁵²

In the above *Hādīth* our Prophet ﷺ looked at the woman who came to offer herself for marriage, and he looked at her including her face for this was his Sunnah and the Sunnah he taught his companions when he said to the one who married a woman without looking at her, 'go and look at her.'⁵³ So the face of the woman must have been visible. It would have been one thing for the woman to approach the Prophet ﷺ but here she approached him in front of the companions. She was out in public so she must have been wearing the *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab* yet the Prophet ﷺ looked at her, showing that the *Khimaar* and the *Jilbaab* did not cover the face.

Jarīr bin Abdullah narrated, "I asked the Messenger of Allah about the sudden look and he said, 'If it happens, look aside.'"

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)⁵⁴

The sudden glance is a glance to nothing other than the face. Everybody knows this from their *Fitrah* and from the

general meaning of the expression. In fact this expression is universally used throughout different languages to describe how one suddenly looks at the face. Furthermore it is because of the sudden look that Allah ﷻ instructed the believers to lower their gaze and this is what the Prophet ﷺ commanded when he instructed Jābir to look aside. Also in the incident with Fadl our Prophet ﷺ turned Fadl's face away so that his gaze would be removed from the woman. This is because lowering the gaze is obligatory while covering the face is not. Had the covering of the face been obligatory, although one can look at the completely covered woman, the sudden look would no longer remain.

ﷻ

THE DIFFERENT STYLES OF COVERING WITH THE KHIMAAR AND JILBAAB

Narrated Ikrimah, "Rifā'ah divorced his wife whereupon Abdur Rahmān bin Zubair Al-Qurathī married her. 'Ā'ishah said that the lady came wearing a green *Khimaar*. It was the habit of the ladies to support each other, so when Allah's Messenger came, 'Ā'ishah said, 'I have not seen the women suffering as the believing women. Look! Her skin is greener than her clothes!' When Abdur Rahmān heard that his wife had gone to the Prophet, he came with his two sons from another wife. She said, 'By Allah! I have done

no wrong to him, but he is impotent and is as useless to me as this,' holding and showing the fringe of her *Thowb*..."

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁵⁵

Narrated 'Ā'ishah, the wife of the Prophet, "The wife of Rifā'ah Al-Qurathī came to Allah's Messenger while I was sitting, and Abū Bakr was also there. She said, 'O Allah's Messenger I was the wife of Rifā'ah and he divorced me irrevocably. Then I married Abdur Rahmān bin Zubair who, by Allah, O Allah's Messenger he has something like a fringe of a garment, showing the fringe of her *Jilbaab*....'"

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁵⁶

In the above texts, the first *Hādīth* mentions how the ex-wife of Rifā'ah came wearing a *Khimaar* and *Thowb*. However the second text shows the *Thowb* was in fact the *Jilbaab*. And there are many texts wherein the *Jilbaab* has been described as the *Thoyb*, showing that the *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab* were worn together in obedience to Allah ﷻ's verses in the Qur'an. So the *Khimaar* would be worn over the head and wrapped over the shoulders, covering the neck and chest. Then the *Jilbaab* would be placed over the *Khimaar* and wrapped around the body, completely covering the underlying dress or clothing of the woman. Although

different styles were common and acceptable, this is the specific style of the *Jilbaab*. (See picture of doll in Appendix A)

Narrated Diḥyah ibn Khalifah al-Kalbi, "The Messenger of Allah was brought some pieces of fine Egyptian linen and he gave me one and said, 'Divide it into two; cut one of the pieces into a shirt and give the other to your wife to cover with it.' Then when he turned away, he said, 'And order your wife to wear a *Thowb* below it and not to show her figure.'"

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud)⁵⁷

Another style for properly covering can be found in the above *Hādīth* and other texts like it. Our Prophet ﷺ instructed Diḥyah to cut the piece of cloth in half and with one half make a shirt for himself and with the other make a *Khimaar* for his wife. So the size of the *Khimaar* was made ample, being able to cover more than the chest area, extending downwards. However in order to wear this style of covering, our Prophet ﷺ told Diḥyah to instruct his wife to wear a loose clothing beneath it, so that her body would not be visible. In this manner the requirements of the *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab* were met because the inner garment was made large and loose, and the *Khimaar* extended down over the garment. (See picture of doll in Appendix B)

Anas bin Mālik reported, 'Umm Sulaim went out wrapping her *Khimaar*.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)⁵⁸

When we read *Hādīth* where the women left the houses wrapping their *Khimaar* without putting on an outer garment, we should understand these texts in context with the style of covering described in the *Hādīth* of Diḥyah. The *Khimaar* was long and wide and the inner garment was loose and ample, so the requirements of the *Jilbaab* were met. There were other styles also, and this is why the scholars of *Hādīth* have stated that the goal is meeting the requirements of the *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab*, even if the styles vary.

Looking at the collective evidences it becomes clear that the *Jilbaab* was a separate piece of clothing, distinct from the *Khimaar*, and the two were worn together or their requirements were met with different styles of clothing. It also becomes clear that the *Jilbaab* exposed the face, covering the body thereafter as an ample loose piece of cloth. Yet instead of presenting primary evidences, reinforcing them with complimentary evidences, building the picture steadily with the support of one text after the other, sisters have busied themselves in cutting and pasting a few texts here and a few texts there, without understanding the principle that in matters where there is a difference of opinion detailed evidences must be presented before one can

arrive at the truth. It is not permissible to begin with the verdicts of the scholars for they have differed and the truth is one with the truth found in the narrations. This is the case when the words *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab* have been highlighted and similar narrations brought forth, then what would we say if these Arabic words had been lost to their translation to an ambiguous English word—the veil.

In addition to this, texts which pertain to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ and the practices of some believing women such as Asmā have been made general, with these texts being removed from their proper places and presented haphazardly. This all becomes clear when we proceed with discussing another word which has been translated as veil, namely the *Hijaab*.



THE HIJAAB

In contrast to the *Khumur* and *Jalaabeeb* of the believing women, Allah ﷻ ordained an obligatory covering for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ which He specifically called 'the *Hijaab*.' During the time of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions the word *Hijaab* referred to the complete screen and covering for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ—when it was used to describe a female covering. This point needs to be understood clearly and to facilitate this we look at how Allah ﷻ, the Messenger, the wives of the Prophet ﷺ and the companions used the word.

"And to David We gave Solomon. How excellent a slave! Verily he was ever oft returning in repentance. When there were displayed before him in the afternoon, well trained horses of the highest breed. He said, 'I did love the good instead of remembering my Lord till the time was over, and (The sun) had hidden behind the *Hijaab*.'"

(Qur'an Sād: 30-32)⁵⁹

In the above verse Allah ﷻ brings out the linguistic

meaning of the word *Hijaab* when He uses it to describe the western horizon which screens the sun from our view after sunset. This 'complete' screening is the essence and nature of the *Hijaab*.

Abdullah bin Mas'ūd narrated that the Prophet said, 'The sign that you have been permitted to come in, is that the *Hijaab* be raised or that you hear my whispering until I forbid you.

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)⁶⁰

In the above *Ḥādīth* the word *Hijaab* has been used to describe the curtain, which is a physical screen, again providing a complete screening.

Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās reported, "Once 'Umar asked the permission to see the Messenger of Allah while there were some Quraishi women with him, who were talking to him and asking many questions raising their voices. When 'Umar asked permission to enter, *Qumna Yabtadirna Al-Hijaab* (they stood up and raced towards the *Hijaab*). When the Messenger of Allah admitted 'Umar, he was smiling. 'Umar said, 'O Messenger of Allah, May Allah keep you happy always.' The Messenger of Allah said, 'I am amazed at these women who were with me. As soon as they

heard your voice, they hastened to screen themselves.' 'Umar said, 'O Messenger of Allah, you have more right to be feared by them.' Then he addressed them saying, 'O enemies of yourselves, do you fear me and do not fear the Messenger of Allah?' They replied, 'Yes, for you are harsher and fiercer as compared to the Messenger of Allah.' Then the Messenger of Allah said, 'By Him in Whose Hand my life is, whenever *Shaytān* sees you taking a road, he takes a road other than yours.'"

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)⁶¹

If we look at the various translations of the above *Ḥādīth* we will see that the actual scene where the women got up and raced with one another towards a screen has not been accurately conveyed. Many English translations describe the women putting on their veils or head covers when 'Umar asked permission to enter. This is not true, for the word '*Qumna*' describes how they stood up, and the words '*Yabtadirna Al-Hijaab*,' describe how they raced with one another to hide behind a screen. This *Hijaab* was a physical screen behind which they hid and had nothing to do with their clothing. This incident is famous and it described how the women used to fear 'Umar. Hence the word *Hijaab* in the above text is used in the same way as that in the verse of Sulaymān and the *Ḥādīth* of Abdullah bin Mas'ūd

regarding etiquettes of entering the homes. It refers to a physical screen in general. This incident had nothing to do with the women's dress code or seclusion, for our Prophet ﷺ was surprised and amused by their action, which resulted from nothing other than the fear of 'Umar.

In contrast, the word *Hijaab* is more commonly used to describe the complete screening of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. It should be noted that although the context is different the linguistic meaning remains the same, with the essence of complete covering and screening being highlighted.

Narrated 'Umar, I said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Good and bad persons enter upon you, so I suggest that you order the mothers of the believers to observe the *Hijaab*.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁶²

Prior to revelation of the verse of *Hijaab*, the wives of the Prophet ﷺ would be seen covered in their *Khumur* and *Jalaabeeb*, just like other believing women. Numerous narrations prove this and nobody would dispute this. However, 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to request that the Prophet ﷺ order them to observe the *Hijaab* but the Prophet ﷺ used to refuse. Two aspects of 'Umar's request need to be noted. Firstly, he was advocating they be screened and

secluded. This is what he meant by the word *Hijaab* for he knew both good and bad people entered upon the Prophet ﷺ and wished the wives of the Prophet ﷺ were completely screened from others. Secondly, he was not requesting this for all women. He was specifically concerned about the mothers of the believers. Our Prophet ﷺ did not comply until one day something happened in Islam when Allah ﷻ revealed the verse of *Hijaab*.

VERSE OF HIJAAB

"O You who believe! Enter not the homes of the Prophet unless permission is given to you for a meal, not to wait for its preparation. But when you are invited, enter, and when you have taken your meal, disperse without sitting for a talk. Verily that annoys the Prophet, and he is shy of (asking) you (to go). But Allah is not shy of the truth. And when you ask for anything you want, ask them from behind a screen (*Hijaab*). That is purer for your hearts and for their hearts. And it is not for you that you should annoy Allah's Messenger, nor that you should ever marry his wives after him. Verily, with Allah that shall be an enormity."

(Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 53)⁶³

In the above verse Allah ﷻ ordered the wives of the Prophet ﷺ to observe *Hijaab*, with the word *Hijaab* describing a screen which completely concealed them from the sight of others. This command was for the mothers of the believers, those whom Allah ﷻ also referred to when He said, 'nor that you should ever marry his wives after him.' So here we have two aspects which were specific for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ as an obligation. Firstly they had to be completely screened and secondly they could not remarry after the Prophet ﷺ death. Such mandatory conditions were imposed on them, not on all women in general. Just like women can remarry after the death of their husband they can also live their life without secluding themselves strictly behind a screen. This is what we can truthfully extract from the above verse using the principles of *Tafsīr* wherein one part of a verse may explain another part of a verse.

THE HADITH OF HIJAAB

Narrated Anas bin Mālīk, 'I, of all the people know best the verse of the *Hijaab*. When Allah's Messenger married Zainab bint Jahsh, she was with him in the house and he prepared a meal and invited the people. They sat down and started chatting. So, the Prophet went out and then returned several times while they were still sitting and talking. So Allah revealed the

verse "O you who believe, Enter not the Prophet's houses, except when leave is given to you for a meal, and not to wait for its preparation ... (up to) ... from behind a *Hijaab*." So the *Hijaab* was set up and the people went away.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁶⁴

If any *Hādīth* deserve to be called the *Hādīth* of *Hijaab* then they are the *Hādīth* of Anas wherein he describes how the verse of *Hijaab* descended. 'Umar was already keen for its implementation but Allah ﷻ did not reveal it until the occasion where our Prophet ﷺ married Zainab bint Jahsh, five years after the *Hijrah* to Madīnah. The people who attended the *Walimah* annoyed the Prophet ﷺ by overstaying while Zainab was with him in the house. Although the Prophet ﷺ was shy to say anything Allah ﷻ was not shy and He revealed the verse of the *Hijaab* after which a screen was placed between Zainab and the people. That day was the first day in the history of Islam when the wives of the Prophet ﷺ became fully screened and secluded from the people. In fact they almost vanished from public sight.

THE HIJAAB WAS A TWO WAY SCREEN

Sālim said that he used to go to 'Ā'ishah as a *Mukātab*

(a type of slave) so she did not conceal herself from me. She used to sit before me and talked to me. One day I went to her and asked her to pray for me. She asked me the reason. I told her that Allah had set me free. She said, 'May Allah reward you.' Then she placed a *Hijaab* in front of me and since then I did not see her.

(Sunnah of Nasā'ī)⁶⁵

Narrated 'Ā'ishah, "Then the Prophet said, 'O Sawdah bint Zama'a! Screen yourself from this boy.' So Sawdah never saw him again."

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁶⁶

The *Hijaab* was a two way screen with neither the wives of the Prophet ﷺ seeing non *mahram* men nor non *manhram* men seeing the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. This was an attribute of its completeness and strict concealment. This point further becomes clear when we look at the actions of the companions in the presence of the mothers of the believers.

Al-Miswar and 'Abdur Raḥman, wrapped their sheets around themselves and asked 'Ā'ishah's permission saying, 'Peace and Allah's Mercy and Blessings be

upon you! Can we come in?' 'Ā'ishah said, 'Come in.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁶⁷

Narrated Anas bin Mālīk that he and Abū Ṭalḥa came in the company of the Prophet and Ṣafīyyah was accompanying the Prophet who let her ride behind him on his she-camel. During the journey, the she camel slipped and both the Prophet and his wife fell down. Abū Ṭalḥa said, 'O Allah's Messenger! May Allah sacrifice me for your sake! Did you get hurt?' The Prophet replied, 'No but take care of the lady.' Abū Ṭalḥa threw his garment over his face and proceeded towards her and threw his garment upon her, and then she got up.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁶⁸

The companions were so concerned about the etiquettes of interacting with the wives of the Prophet ﷺ from behind a screen that they would sometimes cover their own faces to make sure they did not catch even a glimpse of them. This action of the companions covering their faces was reserved for the mothers of the believers and nobody would argue that all believing women received such treatment, just like nobody should argue that their *Hijaab* was the same.

THE HIJAAB: FOR THE WIVES OF THE PROPHET

Within the *Hādīth* literature that describes the time after the Prophet ﷺ's wedding to Zainab bint Jahsh, there are numerous texts which mention the complete screening of the *Hijaab* in reference to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ specifically and not the believing women in general. Yet this important point has been downplayed in our time with little mention of this fact. Instead of highlighting its specificity the word has been made general by its translation into the word veil. Furthermore many Arabic writings have used the word *Hijaab* as it pertains to the verse of *Hijaab* out of context—yet the narrations do not allow this.

Narrated Anas, 'A wedding banquet of bread and meat was held on the occasion of the marriage of the Prophet to Zainab Bint Jahsh... He drew the curtain between me and him and the verse of the *Hijaab* was revealed.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁶⁹

Al-Miswar and Abdur Raḥman, wrapping their sheets around themselves, asked 'Ā'ishah's permission saying, 'Peace and Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you! Shall we come in?' 'Ā'ishah said, 'Come in.' They said, 'All of us?' She said, 'Yes, come in all of you,' not knowing that Ibn Az-Zubayr (the nephew

the 'Ā'ishah) was also with them. So when they entered, Ibn Az-Zubayr entered the place of *Hijaab* and got hold of 'Ā'ishah and started requesting her to excuse him and wept. Al-Miswar and 'Abdur Raḥman also started requesting her to speak to him and to accept his repentance.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷⁰

Narrated 'Ā'ishah, "Then the Prophet said, 'O Sawdah Bint Zama'a! Observe *Hijaab* from this boy.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷¹

Narrated Anas bin Mālik, 'The Prophet stayed with Ṣaḥīyyah Bint Huyai for three days on the way of Khaibar where he consummated his marriage with her. She was amongst those upon whom the *Hijaab* was ordained.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷²

When we read the texts of the *Hādīth* and look for the word *Hijaab* we find it is used extensively for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, confirming and explaining those being addressed in the verse of *Hijaab*. This *tafsīr* is sufficient proof that the verse of *Hijaab* was for the mothers of the believers, for this *tafsīr* makes use of not only the Qur'anic

verses but the *Hādīth* texts which clearly explain that the *Hijaab* was used in reference to the mothers of the believers. In order to oppose this conclusion one has to raise an opinion over divine revelation, negating the principles of *tafsīr* themselves. In the above examples, the first *Hādīth* mentions the beginning of the *Hijaab* in connection with Zainab. The second *Hādīth* mentions the *Hijaab* of 'Ā'ishah when her nephew came to apologise after upsetting her. The third *Hādīth* mentions how Sawdah was commanded to observe *Hijaab* after establishing that the boy was her non mahram. The fourth *Hādīth* mentions how Ṣafīyyah was amongst those ordained to observe *Hijaab*. These texts have two things in common. Firstly they all mention the *Hijaab* as it pertains to the complete screening. Secondly, they all mention the wives of the Prophet ﷺ specifically—namely Zainab, 'Ā'ishah, Sawdah and Ṣafīyyah. In fact when we continue to study the texts on *Hijaab*, we continue to find mention of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. This is clear once the Arabic word *Hijaab* has been highlighted and teased out from the other words which have all been translated as the veil.

So how is it possible that those other than Allah ﷻ, the Messenger, the wives of the Prophet ﷺ and the companions have been permitted to use the verse of *Hijaab* to include all believing women? Are we expected to blindly follow some scholars at the expense of negating the principles of *Tafsīr*? All scholars have made some mistakes in their writings and

only our Prophet ﷺ was protected from conveying untruths. The principles of *Tafsīr* direct us to the conclusion that the verse of *Hijaab* was for the wives of the Prophet for Allah ﷻ addressed them specifically and our Prophet ﷺ and his companions mentioned the *Hijaab* as a screen for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ specifically. From 'Ā'ishah to 'Umar to Anas bin Mālik and others, this is how they talked about the *Hijaab*.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE HIJAAB

Narrated Anas, 'A wedding banquet of bread and meat was held on the occasion of the marriage of the Prophet to Zainab bint Jaḥsh... He drew the *Sitrā* between me and him and the verse of the *Hijaab* was revealed.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷³

The *Hijaab* of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ had many features and we must be familiar with all of them. Primarily it consisted of a physical screening and separation from the sight of others while they were secluded within their homes. In the above *Hādīth* the *Sitrā* acted as the *Hijaab* for Zainab bint Jaḥsh, with the *Sitrā* describing a curtain which our Prophet ﷺ hung between her and the people. Similarly after

the death of the Prophet ﷺ, companions would come to their mother 'Ā'ishah in search of knowledge as she was amongst the greatest of scholars. However she would answer their questions from behind a screen. Thus communication could only occur between the mothers of the believers and the Muslim men from behind a physical screen.

Narrated 'Ā'ishah, 'Whenever Allah's Messenger intended to go on a journey, he used to draw lots amongst his wives, and Allah's Messenger used to take with him the one on whom the lot fell. He drew lots amongst us during one of the *ghazawāt* which he fought. The lot fell on me and I proceeded with Allah's Messenger after Allah revealed the *Hijaab*. *Fa Kuntu* (So I was) carried in my *Howdaj*...'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷⁴

And when the wives of the Prophet ﷺ accompanied him on journeys they were now screened in their *Howdaj*, which was a closed carrier placed on top of the camel. The *Howdaj* became their *Hijaab* during travel. In the above text 'Ā'ishah mentions how she proceeded with the Prophet ﷺ on a journey after the verse of *Hijaab* was revealed. She continues by saying, 'So I was carried in my *Howdaj*.' The *Fa* links that which is before it to that which follows, describing how she was carried in the *Howdaj* 'because' the

verse of *Hijaab* was revealed. Thus the *Howdaj* was her *Hijaab* during travel.

Aṭṭā' said, 'I and Ubaid bin Umair used to visit 'Ā'ishah while she was residing at Jauf Thabīr.' Ibn Juraij asked, 'What was her *Hijaab*?' Aṭṭā' replied, 'She was in a *Qubbah Turkeyyyah* ...'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷⁵

The wives of the Prophet ﷺ would reside in tents while on journeys, with the tent again acting as a screen. Nobody could speak to them except from outside the tent. In the above *Ḥādīth* 'Ā'ishah was residing in a *Qubbah Turkeyyyah* which was a Turkish dome shaped tent. This was her *Hijaab* while resting in the above journey. Yet the words *Qubbah Turkeyyyah* have been translated into old Turkish veil which simply isn't true. The translators have even added the word 'wearing' to suggest it was a piece of clothing when in fact no such word is found in the Arabic text. To facilitate our understanding of what a *Qubbah Turkeyyyah* really was let us look at another *Ḥādīth*.

Abū Sa'īd Al-Khudrī narrated that the Messenger of Allah observed *I'tikāf* in the first ten days of Ramadān. He then observed *I'tikāf* in the middle ten

days in a Turkish tent (*Qubbah Turkeyyah*) with a mat hanging at its door.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)⁷⁶

In the above *Hādīth* our Prophet ﷺ performed *I'tikāf* in a *Qubbah Turkeyyah* and this time the translator has accurately translated it as a Turkish tent. In fact it was a dome shaped Turkish tent and that is why it is called a *Qubbah*, meaning dome.

So the mothers of the believers retained strict seclusion, even during their journeys. From the home to the *Howdaj* to the tents and *Qubbah Turkeyyah* they would not be seen and would remain in seclusion.

Narrated Anas, 'The Prophet stayed for three nights between Khaibar and Medina, and was married to Ṣafiyyah... when he departed, he made a place for her behind him and he made *Al-Hijaab*.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷⁷

In addition to the screening within the homes, and the screening within the *Howdaj* and tents during travel, there were times when the wives of the Prophet ﷺ had to appear outside in public. One example is the story of Ṣafiyyah. She was captured at Khaibar and the Prophet ﷺ freed her and

married her on his journey back to Madīnah. On his way back he had to travel with Ṣafiyyah in the open for she had no *Howdaj*, being recently married to him. However she still had to be screened and our Prophet ﷺ screened her by seating her behind him and then he *Mad Al Hijaab*, meaning stretched out a *Hijaab*. So what was this *Hijaab* he stretched out while she was out in the open? Another text explains this.

Narrated Anas bin Mālik the Prophet came to Khairbar and when Allah made him victorious and he conquered the town by breaking the enemy's defence the beauty of Ṣafiyyah bint Huyai bin Akhtab was mentioned to him, and her husband had been killed while she was a bride. Allah's Messenger selected her for himself and he set out in her company till he reached Saddar Rawha where her menses were over and he married her. The *Hais* was prepared and served on a small leather sheet. Allah's Messenger then said to me, 'Inform those who are around you.' So that was the marriage banquet given by Allah's Messenger for Ṣafiyyah. After that we proceeded to Madīnah and I saw that Allah's Messenger completely covered (*Yuhowwi*) her with a cloak while she was behind him. Then he would sit beside his camel and let Ṣafiyyah put her feet on his knees to ride.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷⁸

From this *Hādīth* we know that her *Hijaab* was a complete covering from head to toe. It is in this context that the word *Yuhowwi* is used, describing the act of completely covering her. Thus the wives of the Prophet ﷺ were the ones who were ordered to cover their faces in the open for the *Hijaab* could not be accomplished unless they were completely covered and screened from head to toe. This was mandatory when they had neither a curtain nor a *Howdaj* to screen them.

Narrated Anas bin Mālīk that he and Abū Ṭalḥa came in the company of the Prophet and Ṣafīyyah was accompanying the Prophet who let her ride behind him on his she-camel. During the journey, the she camel slipped and both the Prophet and his wife fell down. Abū Ṭalḥa said, "O Allah's Messenger! May Allah sacrifice me for your sake! Did you get hurt?" The Prophet replied, "No but take care of the lady." Abū Ṭalḥa threw his garment over his face and proceeded towards her and threw his garment upon her, and then she got up.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁷⁹

The above *Hādīth* further describes how Anas covered his own face when placing a covering over Ṣafīyyah when she fell from the camel. Two points need to be noted. Firstly

the screen was removed when Ṣafīyyah fell, so Anas was ordered to place the covering over her so that she would again be fully screened. Secondly Anas covered his own face in order to not see her, for she had to remain behind a screen. And then he threw this same covering over her so that he would not even catch a glimpse of her. So the attribute of full screening behind clothing was of utmost importance when the wives of the Prophet ﷺ were in the open.

‘Ā’ishah narrated, ‘Whenever Allah’s Messenger intended to go on a journey, he used to draw lots amongst his wives, and Allah’s Messenger used to take with him the one on whom the lot fell ... While I was sitting in my resting place, I was overwhelmed by sleep and slept. Safwān bin Al Mu’attal was behind the army. When he reached my place in the morning, he saw the figure of a sleeping person and he recognised me on seeing me as he had seen me before the order of the *Hijaab*. I woke up when he recited *Istirjā’* when he recognised me. So I covered my face with my *Jilbaab*...’

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁸⁰

The above text is taken from the long *Hādīth* describing the slander against ‘Ā’ishah. ‘Ā’ishah was left behind unknowingly so she had no *Howdaj*. She was laying asleep in her *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab*. As soon as Safwān saw her she

covered her face with her *Jilbaab*. She had no screen so she used her *Jilbaab* as a screen by covering her face with it. Thus it became a *Hijaab* because the *Jilbaab* already covered everything but the face. Now by manipulating the *Jilbaab* and drawing it over her face she was fully covered and screened in the *Hijaab*. This legislated practice of drawing the *Jilbaab* over the face in front of men came from the mothers of the believers. However there was a reason why 'Ā'ishah had her face exposed and that is because she was not prepared, sleeping after being left behind with no screen or *Howdaj*.

'Ā'ishah said, 'Pilgrims were passing by us while we were with the Prophet of Allah. When they came close to us we would draw our *Jilbaab* from the head to cover the face.'

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud)⁸¹

During the state of *Ihrām* women were not permitted to keep their faces constantly covered. So again the wives of the Prophet ﷺ used this technique of covering their faces with their *Jilbaab* when men passed them by.

Hence, the act of covering the face has its origin from the *Hijaab* of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, whether by wearing a complete covering from head to toe or by using the *Jilbaab* to temporarily cover their faces when men

passed by. We should also understand that the wives of the Prophet ﷺ spent the majority of time within their homes or within *Howdaj* and tents during journeys. It was only infrequently that they would be seen in the open and during these times they had to wear a complete covering from head to toe.

From the screen within the homes, to the *Howdaj* and tents during travel, to the complete covering whilst in the open, this is the true description of the *Hijaab* of the mothers of the believers. But there is another aspect which accompanies this description—the life of seclusion behind the *Hijaab*.

THE LIFE BEHIND THE HIJAAB

"O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other women. If you keep your duty, then be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire, but speak in an honourable manner. And stay in your homes, and do not display yourselves like the display of the times of ignorance,"

(Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 32-34)⁸²

The verse of the *Hijaab* with its attribute of screening needs to be understood in conjunction with the verse wherein

Allah ﷻ commands the wives of the Prophet ﷺ to stay within their homes. So the physical screening of the *Hijaab* prevented the outside world from seeing the wives of the Prophet ﷺ within, and the staying in the homes allowed his wives to lead a life of seclusion within. Such life of seclusion was obligatory upon the wives of the Prophet ﷺ after Allah ﷻ revealed the above verse. Let us look at these verses more closely.

O Prophet! Say to your wives, 'If you desire the life of this world, and its glitter, then come! I will make a provision for you and set you free in a handsome manner. But if you desire Allah and His Messenger, and the home of the Hereafter, then verily Allah has prepared for the Good doers amongst you an enormous reward.

O wives of the Prophet! Whoever of you commits an open indecent act, the torment for her will be doubled, and that is ever easy for Allah. And whosoever of you is obedient to Allah and His Messenger and does righteous deeds, We shall give her reward twice over and We have prepared for her a noble provision.

"O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any other women. If you keep your duty, then be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire, but speak in an honourable

manner. And stay in your homes, and do not display yourselves like the display of the times of ignorance, and perform *Salāt*, and give *Zakāt* and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah wishes only to remove *Rijs* from you O *Ahlul Bait*, and to purify you with a thorough purification. And remember that which is recited in your homes of the verses of Allah and the *Hikmah*. Verily, Allah is Most Subtle All Aware."

(Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 28-34)⁸³

In the Qur'an Allah ﷻ changes themes within the various *Surahs* and in Surat Al-Aḥzāb, Allah ﷻ changed the theme in verse 28 when He addressed the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. He continued with this same theme up until the end of verse 34. Thereafter He addressed the believing women and men in general. So verses 28-34 relate specifically to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, which is clear to all those who read the words, "O Prophet! Say to your wives," and 'O Wives of the Prophet!' and 'O Wives of the Prophet! You are not like other women' and, 'Allah wishes only to remove *Rijs* from you O *Ahlul Bait*.' How many times has Allah ﷻ reinforced those being addressed? How is it not clear that the wives of the Prophet ﷺ are the ones being addressed? Do those who say these verses concern all believing women not consider the Words of Allah?

Throughout these verses, the wives of the Prophet ﷺ are

being addressed including when Allah ﷻ informs them, 'Whoever of you commits an open indecent act, the torment for her will be doubled.' Would those who say these verses apply to all believing women say that all believing women will have twice a torment for committing an indecent act? So this verse explains the other verses which follow, in reference to those who are being addressed—the wives of the Prophet ﷺ.

Similarly the verse 'O wives of the Prophet, You are not like other women.' clarifies those being addressed in the verse, 'and stay in your homes.' Thus the wives of the Prophet ﷺ observed strict seclusion in their homes, much stricter than the believing women in general, who although stayed in their homes, were not subject to such strict conditions. In order to deny this obvious explanation, the words 'You are not like other women' have to be rendered dormant.

1. LEAVING THE HOME TO ANSWER THE CALL OF NATURE

Ā'ishah narrated, "Sawdah went out to answer the call of nature after the *Hijaab* was made obligatory. She was a big woman and everybody who knew her before could recognise her. So 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb saw her and said, 'O Sawdah! By Allah you cannot

hide yourself from us, so think of a way by which you should not be recognised when going out.' Sawdah returned while the messenger of Allah was in my house taking his meal and a bone covered with meat was in his hand. She entered and said, 'O Messenger of Allah! I went out to answer the call of nature and 'Umar said such and such. Then Allah sent revelation to him, and when the state of revelation was over, and the bone was still in his hand as he had not put it down, he said. 'You are allowed to go out for your needs.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁸⁴

During the time of the Prophet ﷺ, people would go out to answer the call of nature in places away from their homes. Naturally, the wives of the Prophet ﷺ would also go out for answering the call of nature for this was amongst their basic needs. There are two points which need to be noted regarding the Prophet ﷺ statement, 'You are allowed to go out for your needs'. Firstly, it was in reference to his wives as the above text proves confirming the meaning of the verse 'and say in your homes' in regards to those being addressed—his wives. Secondly, the rule was seclusion in the homes and the exception was leaving them for a basic need. Aside from answering the call of nature there were other basic needs.

2. LEAVING THE HOME TO VISIT THE PROPHET IN I'TIKĀF

Narrated Alī bin Al-Husain, 'Ṣafiyyah went to the Prophet while he was in *I'tikāf*.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁸⁵

From amongst such needs was visiting the Prophet ﷺ during *I'tikāf*. This was also counted as a legitimate need.

3. LEAVING THE HOME TO GO TO THE MASJID

Narrated 'Ā'ishah 'The Prophet intended to practice *I'tikāf* and when he reached the place where he intended to perform *I'tikāf*, he saw some tents, the tents of 'Ā'ishah, Ḥafṣah and Zainab...'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁸⁶

The wives of the Prophet ﷺ were themselves allowed to perform *I'tikāf* in the *Masjid*. This was their right. However they would seek to perform it in tents, wherein they enjoyed both seclusion of worship and screening of the *Hijaab*. It is another thing that the Prophet ﷺ disapproved of what he saw in the above incident, but the reason for his disapproval was the fact that he didn't believe their intentions were correct, as

they competed for his attention. As for the act of performing *I'tikāf* itself, then the wives of the Prophet ﷺ continued performing it even after the death of the Prophet ﷺ.

4. LEAVING THE HOME TO ACCOMPANY THE PROPHET ON JOURNEYS

'Ā'ishah said, 'I proceeded with Allah's Messenger after Allah's order of *Hijaab* had been revealed so I was carried in my *Howdaj* and dismounted while still in it.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁸⁷

And we have already discussed how the wives of the Prophet ﷺ accompanied him on journeys and this was another legitimate reason for leaving their homes. However, as mentioned before, the mothers of the believers travelled in a *Howdaj* which served as their *Hijaab*. They would not be seen on the battlefields anymore, unlike the time before the verse of *Hijaab* was revealed. In order to appreciate this point, let us take a look at a few narrations.

Narrated Anas, 'On the day of Uḥud when people retreated and left the Prophet, I saw 'Ā'ishah bint Abū Bakr and Umm Sulaim with their robes tucked up so

that the bangles around their ankles were visible hurrying with their water skins. Then they would pour the water in the mouths of the people, and return to fill the water skins again and came back again to pour water in the mouths of the people.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁸⁸

Prior to the verse of the *Hijaab*, we find texts wherein the wives of the Prophet ﷺ would be seen along with the believing women, helping the wounded and those on the battlefield. At this time, the mothers of the believers were not screened from the sight of others as the verse of *Hijaab* had not been revealed. The battle of Uhud took place in 3AH whereas the verse of *Hijaab* was revealed in 5AH. After the verse of *Hijaab* was revealed the wives of the Prophet ﷺ continued to accompany him but they would no longer be seen helping the men out in the open. Instead they would remain to themselves, fully screened in their *Howdaj*, tents and clothing. Gone were the days when 'Ā'ishah would be seen along with Umm Sulaim on the battlefields.

Anas bin Mālik narrated, 'On the day of Hunain, Umm Sulaim took out a dagger she had in her possession. Abū Ṭalḥa saw her and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, this is Umm Sulaim. She is holding a dagger ...'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)⁸⁹

Yet the believing women in general would still be seen out in the open during travel and on the battle field. The above incident took place on the day of Hunain in 8AH, three years after the verse of *Hijaab* was revealed.

Umm Atiyyah narrated, 'I took part with the Messenger of Allah in seven battles. I used to stay behind in the camp of men, cook their food, treat the wounded and nurse the sick.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)⁹⁰

Similarly other believing women such as Umm Atiyyah continued to cook for the men and treat the wounded. So the women did not disappear from the sight of others nor did they cease treating and looking after the sick. Rather, it was the wives of the Prophet ﷺ who were now strictly secluded during travel.

5. LEAVING THE HOME FOR HAJJ AND UMRAH

'Ā'ishah found no harm in wearing short trousers by those who fixed her *Howdaj* (in *Ihrām*)

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁹¹

And *Hajj* and *Umrah* were other legitimate reasons for

leaving their homes. However they made sure they were screened as much as possible in keeping with the limitations imposed by the rituals of Hajj. So they travelled in their *Howdaj* and covered their faces temporarily in front of men when affixing a face veil was prohibited.

Aṭā' said, 'Ā'ishah used to perform *Tawāf* separately and never mixed with the men.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁹²

Aṭā' said, 'The wives of the Prophet used to come out at night, in disguise, and used to perform *Tawāf* with the men.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁹³

And they performed *Tawāf* while separated aside, not mixing with the company of the men. Furthermore, they performed it during the night. All these actions describe how they performed the rituals of *Hajj* in the open while retaining their seclusion as much as possible.

So when we review the numerous texts which deal with the activities of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ after the verse of *Hijaab* was revealed, we find the rule was a life of strict seclusion and concealment within their homes, and the exception was leaving their homes for a basic need. From

answering the call of nature, visiting the Prophet ﷺ in *I'tikāf*, going to the *Masjid*, accompanying the Prophet ﷺ during journeys, and performing the rituals of *Umrah* and *Hajj*, these were examples of when they left their homes. Otherwise their life was one of seclusion within their homes. There is a difference between a woman's place in her home and the seclusion of the mothers of the believers within their homes for their seclusion was strict, leaving their homes only for essential basic needs.



THE NIQAAB

As we continue to review the evidences, we find that certain texts have been used to support the ruling that covering the face is obligatory, when in fact this cannot be inferred from the texts. Other texts have been used to promote the same, when such texts only prove that some women covered their faces. So the specific has been made general on two counts. Firstly, the specific *Hijaab* of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ has been made general for all believing women. Secondly, the specific actions of some believing women have been made general for all believing women. By making the specific into general the recommended (*Mustahabb*) will never be known from the obligatory (*Wājib*).

THE HADITH OF ŞAFIYYAH AND THE RIGHT HAND POSSESSION

Narrated Anas, "The Prophet stayed for three nights between Khaibar and Medina, and was married to Şafīyyah. I invited the Muslims to the wedding banquet and there was neither meat nor bread in that

banquet, but the Prophet ordered Bilāl to spread the leather mats on which dates, dried yoghurt and butter were served. The Muslims said amongst themselves, 'will she be one of the mothers of the believers or just what his right hand possesses?' Some of them said, 'If he makes her observe *Hijaab* then she will be one of the mothers of the Believers; and if he does not make her observe *Hijaab* then she will be his right hand possession.' So when he departed, he made a place for her behind him and stretched out the *Hijaab*."

(Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁹⁴

When our Prophet ﷺ took Şafīyyah captive, there were two possibilities. Either he took her as a right hand possession or he took her as a wife. The companions were eager to find out so they looked to see whether or not she would be ordered to observe the *Hijaab*. This was the criterion through which such a distinction would be made because the *Hijaab* was for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ.

Some people claim that the distinction was based on the fact that the believing women observed *Hijaab* and the right hand possessions did not. This is incorrect. Firstly, as we have mentioned, the word *Hijaab* was used in context to the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. The verse of *Hijaab* in the Qur'an and numerous *Hādīth* confirm this. Even the above *Hādīth* confirms this which talks about Şafīyyah, a wife of the

Prophet ﷺ. So in order to arrive at this conclusion one has to negate this plain and simple fact. Secondly, there is no evidence for this claim in the above *Hādīth*. Rather the captive was like the free woman in the respect that she was someone other than a wife of the Prophet ﷺ, with the wives of the Prophet ﷺ being the ones upon whom the *Hijaab* was ordained. Whether one was a slave woman or a free woman, the full screening was not obligatory for either.

ﷺ

THE HADITH OF UMM KHALLĀD

Narrated Thābit ibn Qays, 'A woman called Umm Khallād came to the Prophet while she was one who wore the *Niqaab*. She was searching for her son who had been killed. Some of the companions of the Prophet said to her, 'You have come here asking for your son while you are one who wears a *Niqaab*?' She said, 'If I am afflicted with the loss of my son, I shall not suffer the loss of my modesty.' The Messenger of Allah said, 'You will get the reward of two martyrs for your son.' She asked, 'Why is that so, Messenger of Allah?' He replied, 'Because the people of the Book have killed him.'

(Sunnah of Abū Dāwud)⁹⁵

However, we know from other texts that some believing

women did cover their faces. In the above *Hādīth* Umm Khallād came searching for her son who had been killed on the battlefield. Umm Khallād was known for her modesty and she was one who wore the *Niqaab*. So she appeared before the people with her face covered. However the companions remarked, 'You have come here asking for you son while you are one who wears a *Niqaab*?' A few points need to be noted. Firstly, Umm Khallād observed the etiquettes of the *Hijaab* by covering her face and coming out in front of the men for a crucial need. Secondly, the companions called her one who wore the *Niqaab* meaning there were those who were otherwise. Thirdly, had the *Niqaab* been obligatory, the companions would not have addressed her in this way for they would have expected all women to come out wearing *Niqaab*.

ﷺ

THE HADITH OF THE MUHRIMAH AND NIQAAB

Abdullah bin 'Umar narrated that the Prophet said, '... and the *Muhrimah* should not wear a *Niqaab* nor should she wear gloves.

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁹⁶

'Ā'ishah said, 'A *Muhrimah* should neither wear a *Lithām* nor wear a *Burqa*'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁹⁷

Our Prophet ﷺ prohibited the wearing of *Niqaab* during the state of *Ihrām*, with 'Ā'ishah explaining that the *Lithām* and *Burqa* were included in this prohibition. The *Lithām* exposes the eyes and covers the lower face whereas the *Burqa* completely covers the face.

These texts also prove that women other than the wives of the Prophet ﷺ covered their faces. However these texts do not prove that every believing woman covered her face. Rather, the Prophet ﷺ was making a statement, meaning those of you who wear the *Niqaab* should not wear it when in the state of *Ihrām*. This style of address is well documented in the *Hādīth*. Yet some people use the above texts to promote the view that all women wore *Niqaab* outside of *Ihrām*.

Narrated Abdullah bin 'Umar, "The Prophet said (regarding *Ihrām*), 'Do not wear a shirt or trousers or turbans or a hooded cloak,'"

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)⁹⁸

Would those who use the previous texts to promote the view that all women covered their faces, also promote the view that all men wore turbans? They cannot have one without the other. Either they believe that the statement of the Prophet ﷺ indicates that every believing woman was obligated to wear the *Niqaab* and every believing man was

obligated to wear the Turban outside of *Ihrām*. If this is their conclusion, then it is rejected for believing men were not obligated to cover their heads outside of *Ihrām*. This leaves us with the correct view that the address by the Prophet ﷺ was to stipulate what could not be worn in *Ihrām*, so that those amongst the people who usually wore it will not wear it during *Ihrām*.

NEW IDEA

THE EXAMPLE OF ASMĀ' BINT ABŪ BAKR AND OTHERS

Asmā' bint Abū Bakr said, 'We used to cover our faces in front of men.'

(Mustadrak of Ḥākim)⁹⁹

The above *Hādīth* shows how Asmā' bint Abū Bakr and other women used to cover their faces. Two aspects of this *Hādīth* need to be discussed. Firstly, who was Asmā' bint Abū Bakr, and secondly, who is implied by the word 'we'?

Asmā' was the daughter of Abū Bakr, the wife of Zubair bin Awwām, and the mother of Abdullah and Urwah bin Zubair. Her father was the best of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Her husband was amongst the early Muslims and amongst the ten who were promised *Jannah*. Her sons Abdullah bin Zubair and Urwah bin Zubair were amongst the leaders of the *Muṭṭaḥqūn*. She herself had great *Taqwa*,

excelling in the recommended deeds of worship. She was also known for her immense modesty even before the verse of *Hijaab* was revealed. She was the same woman who refused to sit with the Prophet ﷺ on his riding beast out of modesty and respect for her husband. So it would come to no surprise that Asmā' would be a leader amongst the believing women, excelling in the recommended acts of worship and more closely imitating the actions of the mothers of the believers. Yet instead of recognising her character and position, the above *Hādīth* has been used to promote the view that all believing women covered their faces—as if all believing women were like Asmā' who excelled in the recommended acts of worship.

After clarifying who Asmā' was we now come to the question of what the word 'we' indicates in the above text. Does it imply all believing women or only some of them?

Narrated Abū Mas'ūd, 'When the verse of *Sadaqah* was revealed, we worked as porters.'

(Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)¹⁰⁰

Within some texts we find a companion using the word 'we' to specify all the companions. Within other texts we find a companion using the word 'we' to specify only some companions. For example, in the above *Hādīth* Abū Mas'ūd was not referring to all the companions when he said, 'we

used to work as porters.' Rather he was referring to some of the companions. This becomes clear when we review the collective texts on the occupations of the companions.

Narrated Shaqīq, 'We were commanded to cleanse our mouths with *Siwāk* when we got up during the night.'

(Sunnah of Nasā'i)¹⁰¹

Similarly in the above text Shaqīq was not referring to all of the companions when he said, 'we got up during the night' for not all companions performed *Tahajjud* prayer. This becomes clear when we review the collective texts on *Tahajjud* prayer.

Returning to the *Hādīth* of Asmā', what did she mean when she said, 'We used to cover our faces?' In order to answer this question we again need to look at other texts.

Asmā' bint Abū Bakr said: We used to cover our faces in front of men.

(Mustadrak of Hākim)¹⁰²

Fatimah bint Al-Mundhir said, 'We used to cover our faces when we were in *Ihrām* in the company of Asmā' Bint Abū Bakr As Ṣiddīq

(Muwatta of Mālik)¹⁰³

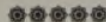
Covering the faces temporarily in *Ihrām* as men passed by, was the practice of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ and Asmā' was amongst those who copied this action of theirs. There were many women with Asmā' who also covered their faces including Fatimah bint Mundhir. However this does not imply all women covered their faces. If that had been the case Fatimah would not have said, 'in the company of Asmā bint Abū Bakr.' There would have been no need to say this if all women were performing this action for it would have been practiced in every group and company. Again the name of Asmā' is mentioned describing how she was a leader amongst the *Muttaqūn*, leading the women in excelling in recommended deeds of worship.

Similarly all other texts which show how some women covered their faces and observed strict seclusion, feed into the group of women who followed its recommendation. This is the proper place to gather such texts. In contrast, the texts in general segregate the *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab* of the believing women from the *Hijaab* of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. This pattern is widespread and quite profound when reviewing the various narrations.

Instead of uniting all the texts together, building the picture by placing everything in its proper place, certain texts have been isolated and presented in a manner which would lead the readers into thinking that the face covering was obligatory for all believing women. Yet the collective

evidences do not allow this. You cannot bring forth a few texts at the expense of the *Fiqh* derived from numerous other texts. Rather the picture is understood by reviewing all the texts as one whole.

Hence, it becomes clear that some believing women covered their faces supporting the *Fiqh* ruling that covering the face is recommended for the believing women. But there is absolutely no ground for making the *Hijaab* of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ or the covering of the face obligatory upon all believing women, for this ruling would greatly conflict with the *Fiqh* derived from the collective evidences.



CONCLUSION

When we review the verses of The Qur'an and the collective texts of the *Hādīth*, studying them in accordance with the principles of *Tafsīr* and *Fiqh*, the descriptions of the *Khimaar*, *Jilbaab* and *Hijaab* become crystal clear! The obligatory dress code of the believing women becomes clear and distinct from the obligatory *Hijaab* of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, and this is why so many scholars of the past concluded this. Allah ﷻ did not hide the truth, for the truth is found in the narrations if only we return to their careful study. If only we take the narrations as evidence and truth, over and above the opinions of the scholars who differed on this issue. Due to their differing, their statements and verdicts cannot be taken as proof, for they have differed, and the truth is one, with the truth found in the narrations.

Reviewing the evidences in the English language comes with a call for the students of knowledge who are well versed in both Arabic and English to come forth and earnestly strive to correct the mistakes. This will be a mighty service for the English speaking Muslims and a means for great reward with Allah ﷻ. I have discussed a few of the

mistakes and highlighted them in the introduction but further work and scrutiny is needed. How can we leave the erroneous additions, deletions and confusions within the translated texts, when so many English speaking Muslims are in need of this knowledge? Do the English speaking Muslims not have a right to the pristine pure truth when the Qur'an and Sunnah have been kept preserved?

Reviewing the various books of *Tafsīr* comes with a call to review the principles of *Tafsīr* that the scholars of *Tafsīr* were teaching. They never claimed to be correct in each and every statement and view, nor did they always provide convincing proofs for their claims, nor did their writings always agree with each other. They strove in explaining the Book of Allah ﷻ with their works being greatly beneficial and full of truths. Yet their words were not free of being opposed or refuted, nor were they infallible and free from making mistakes. If we look carefully we will find that the scholars of *Tafsīr* took great care in calling to the principles of *Tafsīr*. When we use such principles we find that the truth becomes clear, with verses of the Qur'an explaining other verses of the Qur'an, being supported and clarified by the collective texts of the Sunnah. We cannot follow an opinion of a scholar of *Tafsīr* at the expense of abandoning the principles of *Tafsīr* for this would most surely not make sense.

Reviewing the various texts of *Hādīth* regarding the

topic of the *Khimaar*, *Jilbaab* and *Hijaab* comes with a call to review the collective narrations as a whole, deriving understanding from their texts collectively in keeping with the principles of *Fiqh*. This is the methodology of the *Hādīth* scholars and the call of the Jurists who never advocated blind following or *Taqīd*. Rather what matters is the review of the evidences with the evidences found in the narrations. This behaviour of cutting and pasting a few texts here and few texts there has to stop—in matters where the scholars have differed. Rather the collective narrations have to be presented and reconciled together as one.

Reviewing the words *Khimaar*, *Jilbaab* and *Hijaab* comes with a call to compare and unite the texts wherein similar words have been used. In doing so the *Hijaab* of the mothers of the believers becomes clear and distinct from the obligatory dress code of the believing women, with the description of the *Hijaab* beautifully explaining the verse of *Hijaab* in the Qur'an. The *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab*, together with their attributes and features also become clearly known. This behaviour of translating and propagating texts with the English word veil has to stop, for the individual Arabic words *Khimaar*, *Jilbaab* and *Hijaab* need to accompany the various texts so that the readers will know which covering is being addressed.

Reviewing the *Hijaab* of the mothers of the believers comes with a call to review the life of seclusion which accompanied the full screening. If sisters wish to imitate this

full covering and screening, then let them also seclude themselves in their homes and not leave them except for a basic essential need. Let them excel in righteousness and *Taqwa* while performing a recommended praiseworthy deed. However, this behaviour of wearing the *Niqaab* yet frequenting the outdoors for other than a basic need has to stop, for this greatly opposes the life of seclusion which must accompany the *Niqaab*. If excelling in imitating the mothers of the believers is what is intended by wearing the *Niqaab*, then the women would more closely follow their life of seclusion.

Reviewing the *Hijaab* of the mothers of the believers also comes with a call to clarify that it was only obligatory for the mothers of the believers. As for the believing women in general it was only a recommendation, following the example of Asmā' and others. The blind following of the opinion that the screen for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ together with the full covering is obligatory for all Muslim women has to stop, for there is no proof from the collective narrations for this claim. And the scholars who ruled that the face covering was obligatory have weak evidences to support their claims, no match for the picture which emerges when studying the collective narrations. This is why they were greatly opposed by many scholars who established the proofs that the face covering was not obligatory upon the believing women.

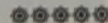
Reviewing the *Khimaar* of the believing women comes with a call to understand that it covers the neck and chest area in addition to the head, while leaving the face exposed. No attention is paid to those who oppose this description. This behaviour of covering the heads while leaving the neck and chest area exposed has to stop for this is not what is intended by the *Khimaar* as it seeks to cover the *Jayb*. The *Khimaar* has a purpose which needs to be properly fulfilled in order for the action to be accepted by Allah ﷻ.

Reviewing the *Jilbaab* of the believing women comes with a call to understand that both the *Khimaar* and the *Jilbaab* have to be worn together, when leaving the homes, unless the woman uses a legislated alternative style. But this behaviour of wearing a *Khimaar* with tight clothing has to stop, for such clothing does not meet the criteria for the *Jilbaab*. Instead the believing women have to properly cover, satisfying the requirements of both the *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab*.

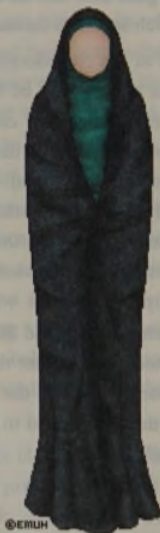
Together with this clothing Allah ﷻ has instructed us to clothe our eyes as we protect and guard our gaze. If only the women lowered their gaze they would feel a sense of separation as they leave their homes without leaving their modesty, dignity and shyness. The lowering of the gaze is a powerful statement and an important companion which keeps the woman from looking at the prohibited and mixing with non *mahram* men. When the believing woman puts on

her *Khimaar* and *Jilbaab* and steps out of her home whilst lowering her gaze, she takes with her all of her essential coverings, with these coverings reminding her of who she is. The lowering of the gaze also has an affect upon the people for it is an action which speaks a thousand words.

These are some of the considerations which are greatly needed in our time as we strive to be students of knowledge and the best Muslim women we can. Allah ﷻ has not overburdened us nor has He sent the Qur'an to cause us distress. We can be righteous and law abiding Muslim women by properly observing that which He made obligatory and staying away from that which He forbade. This is part of the compulsory knowledge we seek so that we can correctly worship our Creator with *Imān*, *Taqwa* and *Birr*. It is He Who sent Muḥammad ﷺ with pure knowledge and this is what we seek as we filter through the differences of opinion on our journey back to the narrations. Truth will always be one, with the truth found in the collective texts of the Qur'an and Sunnah.



APPENDIX A



©ERUH

APPENDIX B



©ERUH

GLOSSARY

KHIMAAR- Head cover
KHUMUR - Plural for *Khimaar*
JILBAAB - Outer garment
JALAAABEEB - Plural for *Jilbaab*
HIJAAB - Full screen or covering
NIQAAB - Affixed face veil
MIRT - Loose woollen unstitched sheet
MUROOT - Plural for *Mirt*
QUBBAH TURKEYYAH - Turkish tent

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⁷¹ *Ibid*, see ref. 66.

⁷² Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 5, No. 4212. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁷³ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 6, No. 4793. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, see ref. 41.

⁷⁵ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 2, No. 1618. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁷⁶ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, vol. 1, No. 632. Summarised two set version (Arabic/English).

⁷⁷ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 5, No. 4213. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁷⁸ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 3, No. 2235. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁷⁹ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 4, No. 3086. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, see ref. 41.

⁸¹ Sunnah of Abū Dāwud.

⁸² Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 32-34. Translation by Muhsin Khan.

⁸³ Qur'an Al-Aḥzāb: 28-34. Translation by Muhsin Khan.

⁸⁴ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 6, No. 4795. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁸⁵ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 3, No. 2039. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁸⁶ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 3, No. 2034. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, see ref. 41.

⁸⁸ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 4, No. 2880. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁸⁹ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, vol. 1, No. 1130. Summarised two set version.

⁹⁰ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, vol. 1, No. 1132. Summarised two set version.

⁹¹ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 2, No. 354. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁹² Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 2, No. 1618. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁹³ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 2, No. 1618. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁹⁴ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 5, No. 4213. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁹⁵ Sunnah of Abū Dāwud, English translation Book 14, no. 2482.

⁹⁶ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 3, No. 1838. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁹⁷ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 2, No. 356. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁹⁸ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 3, No. 1838. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

⁹⁹ Mustadrak of Ḥākim, 1/624 (Arabic).

¹⁰⁰ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 2, No. 1415. Translation by Muhsin Khan (Arabic/English).

¹⁰¹ Sunnah of Nasā'ī, vol. 2, No. 1627. Translation by M. I. Siddiqi.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, see ref. 99.

¹⁰³ Muwatta of Mālik, Chapter 20.6, No. 16. Translation by Aisha Abdur Rahmān (English).

Sister Kamillah: embraced Islam 30 years ago. She was born and raised in Michigan USA, in a Christian household with relatives being Southern Baptist Ministers from the 'Bible Belt' region in North Carolina. Her mother dedicated her to the Church from an early age and it was no surprise that she wanted to spread the word of God. But there was a problem; she didn't believe in the 'Trinity'. Upon realizing her true beliefs she began her journey in search of the true religion, with Allah guiding her to Islam.

She spent her years studying *Hādīth*, striving to understand the statements and actions of Prophet Muhammad. She spent several years bringing the various texts from the different books of *Hādīth* together, promoting the practice of looking at the collective evidences.

She has spent many years writing articles to clarify the *Sunnah* and recently attracted attention through www.todaymuslimah.com, a online magazine for Muslim women, where she is currently the Chief Editor of its Islamic Section. The magazine has spread to over 35 countries worldwide.

NIQAAB: A Seal on the Debate - the author has brought together the collective evidences from the various books of *Hādīth* in discussing the dress code of the *Muslimah*. The book brings to light the meaning of *Khimaar*, *Jilbaab*, *Hijaab* and *Niqaab* and describes their various attributes after teasing them out from the ambiguous word 'veil', which they have all been translated into the English language. The book also clarifies the differences in dress code between the wives of the Prophet and the Muslim women and explains how incorrect rulings and opinions have been promoted. The author has shown the true position of the *Niqaab* in Islam and describe in rich detail the true obligatory dress code of the *Muslimah*.

As such, the author has essentially placed a Seal on the Debate regarding the *Niqaab*.